

AN ORAL HISTORY OF THE WINFIELD DUNN ADMINISTRATION  
INTERVIEW WITH  
JUDGE WILLIAM RUSSELL

BY - CHARLES W. CRAWFORD  
TRANSCRIBER - BETTY WILLIAMS  
ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH OFFICE  
MEMPHIS STATE UNIVERSITY





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INTERVIEW WITH JUDGE WILLIAM RUSSELL

MAY 14, 1980

BY CHARLES W. CRAWFORD

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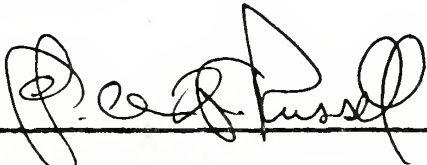




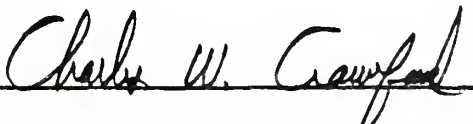
## MEMPHIS STATE UNIVERSITY

## ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH OFFICE

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PLACE Loudon, TennesseeDATE May 14, 1980.

(INTERVIEWEE)



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THIS IS A PROJECT OF THE ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH OFFICE OF MEMPHIS STATE UNIVERSITY. THIS PROJECT IS "AN ORAL HISTORY OF THE WINFIELD DUNN ADMINISTRATION". THE PLACE IS LOUDON, TENNESSEE. THE DATE IS MAY 14, 1980. THE INTERVIEW IS WITH JUDGE WILLIAM RUSSELL. THE INTERVIEW IS BY DR. CHARLES W. CRAWFORD, DIRECTOR OF THE MEMPHIS STATE ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH OFFICE. TRANSCRIBED BY BETTY WILLIAMS.

DR. CRAWFORD: Judge Russell, let's start with a little background information about yourself, if you will start with your family, your education, your experience up to the time you met Winfield Dunn.

JUDGE RUSSELL: I was born on April 9th, 1939 in Keen Mountain, Virginia. My family on both sides have been from Tennessee. My father was a Methodist minister and as such was stationed when I was born in Canton County, Virginia, where I was born. I lived there a year or two and then moved to Narrows, Virginia, and from Narrows to Newport, Tennessee.

DR. CRAWFORD: What year did you move to Newport?

JUDGE RUSSELL: We moved to Newport right after the end of World War II, '46-'47-- in that neighborhood-- and stayed at Newport for four years. [We] moved from Newport to Radford, Virginia and stayed in Radford three or four years and moved to Tazewell, Virginia. It was at Tazewell that were the years of my high school education. I was able to get all of my high school years in Tazewell, Virginia, graduating in 1957.



DR. CRAWFORD: Graduating in '57?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Right. Upon graduation I entered Tennessee Wesleyan College that same summer. I stayed at Tennessee Wesleyan College in Athens, Tennessee, through the summer and then entered East Tennessee State College that fall. I left East Tennessee State in the middle of the quarter and joined the Marines and stayed in the Marine Corps for the next four years. I believe I joined--enlistment day--on December 8, 1957. I stayed about four years and came back to school after that.

DR. CRAWFORD: That was about '61 wasn't it?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Sixty-one. I think I missed a year somewhere. I think I enlisted in '58 and was discharged in September--three months early to go back to school in the fall of '62. I came back to Athens again and re-entered Tennessee Wesleyan and stayed there a quarter and moved back to East Tennessee State and completed my undergraduate work, majoring in history and political science, graduating from East Tennessee State in '65. On graduation there I entered University of Tennessee Law School and went straight through and graduated in the early part of '67 and '68. While I was at the University of Tennessee College of Law I lived in Loudon and commuted on a daily basis living in a house right across the street from where we are now in front of the courthouse which later became my law office. While I was at the University, I clerked in an office in Loudon County and worked while I went to law school. Following completion of my studies at the University I took the bar and passed the bar and became a partner in





the law firm of Sproul and Russell, for whom I had clerked for Sproul.

It was while I was working with Harvey L. Sproul that I first met and became acquainted with Winfield Dunn and this was in the early part, I guess, of 1970. There had been several people mentioned that had been potential candidates for the position of Republican candidate for governor in the primary. As I recall, the people that I was working closely with at the time were associated with Dr. Nat Winston and that was when he made his first attempt. It became apparent to those people that Dr. Winston was not going to be able at that time to become a viable candidate in that particular election. I got a call from Tony Koella related to the Koella family in Maryville and Blount County.

DR. CRAWFORD:                      How do you spell Koella? K-O-E-L-L-A.

JUDGE RUSSELL:                    That's close. Tony is a brother to  
Senator Carl Koella.

DR. CRAWFORD:                    That is Koella.

JUDGE RUSSELL:                    That is correct. They had been for Dr.  
Winston and apparently had decided that he was not going to be able to do it. And he had told them that and he was related to them in business and other ways. They suggested that there was a person from Memphis by the name of Winfield Dunn who would make a good candidate. At the time I was the chairman of the Young Republicans Club in my county and vice chairman of the executive committee of the Republican Party. We had during the early parts of that year been interested in Senator Bill Brock's



campaign. I recall we had established a day for Senator Brock and the day we had established consisted of a series of teas, meetings, and breakfasts and the normal run of things to do when you've got a candidate available to you [to] get exposure in the county. We had a call from one of the Koellas asking us if Winfield Dunn could come up and meet some people in Loudon County. We of course told him that he could.

DR. CRAWFORD: Do you remember about when that was in 1970?

JUDGE RUSSELL: It was in the early part of the year. I don't recall if it was in February, March or somewhere along in there. Probably March or maybe April, but it was not during the cold months. So later I did receive a call from Winfield Dunn personally, and he asked if he could come up and just meet some people in Loudon County. He wanted to know where he could stay here in motels and so forth. At the time we did not have any motels available in the county. We invited him to stay at our house so he and Jack Neil from Memphis, a lawyer [who] came, and we met them at the Knoxville airport and brought them down to spend the night and that was the first time I had ever met Winfield Dunn personally. I had heard his name a few times before.

DR. CRAWFORD: What impressions of him did you have at that time, sir?

JUDGE RUSSELL: My first impression was that he was an extremely outgoing, personable positive type individual, better than most people I've ever seen before or





since. He had an ability to project into the person he was talking to in a sense at the time that they were an important person or he was glad to be talking with you. He made you feel comfortable. You had confidence in him and [he] was extremely interested in what he was doing at the time. We, as I recall, met him in the early afternoon hours at the airport. I think we went around a few places and introduced him. The next day although he was not an official part of the program he made himself available to all the things that we had set up for Senator Brock. Without any help from any organizational standpoint during that day at all the breakfasts, receptions and teas and the banquet that evening he had not only met, but I think had turned on everybody he had talked to during the day on his own.

As a result of that visit, of course I became excited about him as a person and I felt like from what he had said and things about his interest about being a part of Tennessee politics, being a part of Tennessee government, not only captured my interest and attention from the human being standpoint, but I thought [it] would be good to have that kind of choice available to the people of Tennessee. It appeared, whether he had a chance to win or not, and I didn't have any concept if he did or didn't, that this was the kind of person that ought to be involving themselves in Tennessee government.

I think most people that he talked with that I talked to since he talked with them had that kind of concept. It didn't matter to them that he didn't have the background or experience nor the know-



ledge to do what he said he could do, but the choices were so drastic I think everyone was willing to see if that would work and put their faith in this particular individual to see if he could do it. It might not work, but it wouldn't work because he wouldn't try or he wouldn't tell them he was doing it for these purposes and then do it for some other purpose or such as for personal gain or trying to build some kind of personal organization for the benefit of those involved in it. I think as a result of that characteristic that he has that he attracted a lot of people on his own that most people can't do because they don't have that ability. They don't have that characteristic.

To ever say that he had an organization in East Tennessee at that time or any time thereafter or that resembled any kind of a machine would be a misstatement because I think he did it on his own ability to touch and be with people and convince people that they should follow him.

DR. CRAWFORD:                      What kind of organization did Jenkins, Jarman and Robertson have in Loudon County?

JUDGE RUSSELL:                    Taking them in the order that you mentioned them, Bill Jenkins had in the primary as his local contact the now former law associate of mine Mr. Ed Arnold, who has served in the Legislature with Mr. Bill Jenkins. Mr. Jenkins did not have during the primary a particularly strong organizational type group. Mr. Jarman had most of the so called older old-line county structured politicians in his group. I think in this particular county he was able to do that and able to accomplish that because



we had at that time plants associated with the Genesco family of chain plants and they owned plants here and had people working for him. Of course at that time they had the money put out to organize in the traditional sense.

I don't really recall whether or not Robertson had anybody specially or formally organized. He didn't have any organization to speak of or even an apparent large personal support of any kind.

DR. CRAWFORD: Winfield Dunn must have come a long way up, being from Shelby County, but it was mostly done by the personal impression that he created.

JUDGE RUSSELL: That's my opinion. Winfield could get through to the people. This county being a small county, and although actively interested in and always dabbling in politics, they would do it in this county that any candidate that wants to come in and do his song and dance and whatever, they are usually polite enough to listen. Anytime Winfield Dunn could get a room full of people to listen to him he was going to convince the majority of them that there was something right about what he was saying.

DR. CRAWFORD: What was the approximate population of Loudon County? I know we could look it up, but about how many people?

JUDGE RUSSELL: The official census population at that time was 24,750, somewhere around that figure, which probably now ten years later is something like 31 or 32,000. You know there is a pretty good percentage of increase.





DR. CRAWFORD: Did you decide after that first meeting to support Winfield Dunn at that time?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Yes sir.

DR. CRAWFORD: What sort of organization was put together? What did you do?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Well, it all goes back to that day he was here for the Brock thing. Senator Brock here in this county had no particular problems with any opposition. Several of us at the time involved in the local political structure from the official standpoint talked about who was going to be on whose campaigns and etc. and making sure that everybody that was viable and interested had representation in the county. I remember talking with our present chairman on the day that Winfield was here. It was Harry Wampler, and Harry and Senator Brock and I talked about me being the Brock representative as I remember in that particular campaign. Which I certainly had no objection to doing because I am and was and still am a great fan of Senator Brock. But there was no challenge there and that would have been easy but there was something about Winfield that would appear to be more exciting and had nothing to do with winning because nobody thought that any Republican [candidate] including Winfield Dunn especially at that time had any chance of winning.

DR. CRAWFORD: What about the Republican Party here in Loudon County? What percentage of the vote did you ususally get?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Traditionally, Loudon County is Republican.



That difference in percentage has been waning over the last several years particularly in the latter years. Loudon County has never been represented by anything other than a Republican in congress since the beginning in 1870. There have been four county judges in this county--three of whom have been Republican and one a Democrat. This last year our first Democratic sheriff was elected for this county. When I ran for office, I had opposition both in the primary and in the general election and my margin of victory was less than 600 votes.

DR. CRAWFORD: What year was that?

JUDGE RUSSELL: I ran in 1974. That was after I left the governor's administration. Loudon County still can be called a traditional Republican County, but as in other counties of Tennessee willingness of people to be identified either as a Republican or a Democrat is shifting, and we have the same situation that more people would prefer to be regarded as independent although the Republican candidates usually win in this county.

DR. CRAWFORD: Well, they are subject to being influenced by a person who can convince the independent voters. Winfield did well with people who considered themselves independents.

JUDGE RUSSELL: No question about that.

DR. CRAWFORD: What did you do during the primary campaign?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Do you mean as it relates to the campaign?

DR. CRAWFORD: Yes.





JUDGE RUSSELL: Well, as a result of that day and then as a result of the conference with Jack McNeil and Winfield--you know they didn't have any organization to speak of in East Tennessee. They had some contacts through Winfield's dental associates. They had some friends that Jack had from college days, but as far as official political contacts they didn't have any. So as I recall during the primary my title was Second Congressional District Manager. I didn't have any idea what that meant or what it involved or anything else. We didn't have any money and no materials. During the primary in this part of the country we really never did. We had some. We raised some locally and there was a very strong active committee within the county which consisted of mainly people who had never had serious organizational activity in politics prior to this time. Some had and some hadn't. In this county it is run by committee. [In] some counties within the district there weren't any committees at all. Knox County had a pretty strong group there. Of course, they were battling on the home grounds of the other candidates. In the far reaches of the district as you got closer to where Bill Jenkins lived, of course, the Bill Jenkins forces were somewhat stronger over there.

DR. CRAWFORD: Did you travel much through the Congressional District?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Yes sir. We traveled not only with the candidate when he was here, but on our own traveling and trying to keep aware particularly of rallies and schedules and trying to make sure that the people in Memphis were



aware of when things were happening here that he could come and have exposure and be invited to do whatever was possible at the time.

DR. CRAWFORD: I know there wasn't a great deal of money.

Did you go to the county in times when you felt it was most important for him to be here?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Yes sir. Are you talking about this county in particular? Yes, he came as I recall probably a disproportionate amount to this county as he maybe should have considering the population and so forth. Like I said, no organization or no group of people sold Winfield Dunn. He did that himself. The counties that he did have time and was able to get out personally among the people are the counties he carried best. Of course, he carried this county in the primary as I recall in this district he also carried Union County. He did not carry Knox County, but nobody expected him to. He had a real significant showing in Knox County which enabled him to couple up with his apparent trend in Shelby to carry him through. I don't think anybody, particularly outside the Dunn's forces, had any thought at all that he would win. I recall the closing days of the primary we spent a lot of time going around the state talking to groups of people more or less preparing them for a graceful defeat. I don't think he ever gave up the idea that he might win, but I think he realized that that would be a tremendous upset and it would be a surprise to most people and maybe to himself. I think he always thought there was the possibility that he wouldn't. And I think had he not he was trying his best



to assure beforehand that his supporters stayed in line so to speak and gracefully came back and supported whomever the winner might have been.

DR. CRAWFORD:                   Where did you try to schedule him most in the Second District?

JUDGE RUSSELL:               Well, obviously the population in the Second Congressional District is in Knox County. Let me clarify one thing. I suppose when I say that my title was the Second Congressional District Campaign Manager, there would probably be a footnote to that. Inasfar as the internal workings of Knox County I had very little to do with that. I would say that E.S. and Jack Bevins were the ones that did all the work. I was there and I sat in on the meetings, but had no idea what the internal workings in Knox County politics were and couldn't add anything to it or do anything other than be there. My time spent arranging, scheduling, talking and trying to get other people to listen to us was done primarily outside of Knox County .

DR. CRAWFORD:               I know Knox County raised money in the County. Did you try to raise funds in the Second Congressional District other than through county organizations?

JUDGE RUSSELL:               No sir, there was no--not from my standpoint. There was an attempt made with some minor success within each county to raise funds to handle local advertising, to pay for bumper stickers and etc. The governor himself was probably the most effective fund raiser that he had in the



primary. He could go out and raise more money in thirty minutes than anybody else that he had at that time could in thirty days.

DR. CRAWFORD:                   Where did you have your headquarters in Loudon County?

JUDGE RUSSELL:               My house. (Laughter) I don't think during the primary that we established a separate office space or headquarters. After the primary, of course, the party itself established several different headquarters. I don't remember us having a separate office other than my house or somebody else's house or some other place as official party headquarters.

DR. CRAWFORD:               What kind of advertising did you prefer? I know you didn't have very much money for it.

JUDGE RUSSELL:               Well of course, the best advertising we had was the candidate himself as I have indicated to you. He spent more days here than probably the population warranted. We used newspaper advertising which in this county has been an effective means by local newspaper. The bumper sticker campaign was pretty effective here in the primary. We did have posters scattered about throughout the county. I think the state organization did some radio tapes which we used. As I recall very limited TV coverage.

DR. CRAWFORD:               What kind of a liaison did you maintain with the Memphis office?

JUDGE RUSSELL:               My contact liaison with the Memphis office was with Carolyn . . .

DR. CRAWFORD:               Wein, I believe . . .





JUDGE RUSSELL: Yes. Who in my opinion was a fortunate addition to the governor's staff at that time. She performed chores that usually would have been assigned to 10 or 12 people in a well financed campaign. She was a scheduler, counselor, cheerleader, friend, and in my opinion was a tremendous asset to the governor in just being able to talk to people that needed material, needed scheduling, and needed information. I think she did a tremendous job.

DR. CRAWFORD: Were you able to get things you needed from the Memphis headquarters? Could you contact them quickly and get anything sent out?

JUDGE RUSSELL: We could get in contact with them, they didn't have what we needed. Whatever they had they would make it available to us. It was just a question of not having it.

DR. CRAWFORD: Well, I know money was short during the primary. Were you surprised with the outcome in August when the primary was held?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Yes.

DR. CRAWFORD: What changes did you make following that in the campaign?

JUDGE RUSSELL: What changes did he make?

DR. CRAWFORD: What changes did you make in the Second District?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Of course, the days following the primary election were somewhat hectic, to say the



least. Apparently the powers that be in the Shelby County area met quickly and made some very far-reaching decisions which proved to be for the governor's sake good decisions! Since Winfield was the winner, he obviously attracted the attention of those other political powers in the state who needed to then become associated with him. A lot of the information that I have from this point on about that is derived from talking to people I had known and here-say type thing. The best that I understand what happened [is] Howard Baker made available to the governor whatever resources that he could. I think that was motivated for several reasons and (1) I think he wanted Winfield to win obviously. But I think he wanted him to win so that the Republican Party would become stronger which would ultimately help Senator Baker [and] which is an understandable stance for the senator to take. It is part of that whole decision making process.

The people who had worked for Howard Baker on a professional staff then in essence became the campaign staff for the general election. As a result of that, several people who had been working in the primary were replaced and there were hurts, and scars and feelings crushed at that time. Some healed and some didn't. I guess that's one of those necessary decisions that you make. In this case if you term winning the election as being the test, you made the right decision.

DR. CRAWFORD: Well, I think Winfield wanted to stay with the people that had supported him as much as possible.



JUDGE RUSSELL: There's no question about that.

DR. CRAWFORD: Of course, he was getting a lot of new advice from that point on. His campaign gained a lot in momentum. How did that affect the Second Congressional District campaign?

JUDGE RUSSELL: As I have indicated to you I don't think you can talk about the Second Congressional District organization as you could any other political race or most political races because it wasn't typical and certainly wasn't formal and well structured neither from an experienced standpoint or a finance standpoint or anything else. When the primary election was over and the changes were made, the changes in designation were made, the people who had been for other candidates obviously had to be taken into consideration. The talents they had available were put to work, [and] people who had been designated county chairman were replaced in some instances. Not so much because the work they had done in the primary wasn't appreciated but we were talking about facing a new problem and it obviously required more people and more talent and a merger of all the other forces to do it. As in any situation I've ever seen like that, some people get hurt, some fall out, and then the rest of them get together and go on and make it work.

DR. CRAWFORD: Did many people get hurt in the fallout in this area?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Well, I don't know what you mean by many, but I personally know of several that did.





I'd say that in every county there were five to ten principal people at one time or another with the period of readjustment. I don't know of any people that just absolutely deserted the cause-- maybe one or two, but not a significant number.

DR. CRAWFORD: After a primary one of the big challenges always is trying to get the party to close ranks. How did that work out in this area? That is, getting the Jarman, the Jenkin, and the Robertson supporters?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Well, I think it worked out in that there was a substantial coming together. I think you know and anybody else that lived in these times that it was not so much the Republican Party getting back together as it was [getting] either Independents and or Democrats who were not particularly happy with their candidate that made the difference. I think the Republicans, yes, substantially stayed together after the primary. But that alone, of course, could not have caused the outcome.

DR. CRAWFORD: Well, I think many Democrats weren't willing to support the Democratic candidate in the general election--John J. Hooker. I am sure that helped. Did that seem to help in the Second Congressional District?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Sure.

DR. CRAWFORD: It certainly helped in the Memphis area. How did your campaign change in terms of expenditures? Did you find money easier to get after the primary-- between then and the general election?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Absolutely, of course, at that time. You



are asking me that question and I am answering it in the affirmative, "Yes", it did. After that time I, personally, was not responsible for nor had anything to do with raising the money. As you might imagine the people then interested in the campaign were readily available and the people were brought in and or recruited and or shifted over from other campaigns who were well-versed and particularly good at raising money. Money from the date that the primary was over was not of major concern as far as we were concerned in the field. I am sure that the people that were ultimately responsible for doing it state-wide had some problems. The closer it got to the end of the election the easier it became. It had a snowballing effect. And there was some left over.

DR. CRAWFORD: Did you work campaigning in the area get any easier as time went on during the fall?

JUDGE RUSSELL: It got easier in terms of being able to have some support of hope. It was easier in getting people to do things. It was easier to get people to cooperate, to make available resources and other things. It was easier to get in to see people; it was easier to get commitments; it was easier to get the governor scheduled on programs. People would call you up and try to get the candidate rather than you asking them to let him come.

DR. CRAWFORD: You had not been completely optimistic about winning in the primary. How did you start feeling about the outcome before the general election?



JUDGE RUSSELL: I don't know the exact point during the campaign it became apparent to those of us who were working on a volunteer almost full-time basis that either one of two things were happening: We were being awfully misled by what we were hearing from almost everybody or that he was going to win. Of course, that can happen to anybody in a first campaign. Not many people are going to tell you that they are not going to vote for you but . . .

DR. CRAWFORD: That's always a danger.

JUDGE RUSSELL: I think you can learn to judge those things, and I think that most people felt that there was a genuine candidacy going at that time.

DR. CRAWFORD: Had you changed headquarters or was it still in your home?

JUDGE RUSSELL: We did change then. Of course, this county and other counties in this district, once the primaries are over, moneys were made available through the party to establish a headquarters. We had headquarters in Loudon, and Lenoir City and, as I recall, one in Greenback in this particular county. In every county in the district we had an office and Dale Young and I went to work in the Farragut Hotel building in Knoxville in the Second District Headquarters.

DR. CRAWFORD: Did you travel more in the district during the general election?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Yes sir.

DR. CRAWFORD: Of course you had more interest through-

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out the Second Congressional District from that time.

JUDGE RUSSELL: Even some in the First District as I recall.

DR. CRAWFORD: Where were you on Election Night November, 1970?

JUDGE RUSSELL: I started out in Loudon County with the first group that we started out in the primary and then as the results started coming in we went to Knoxville and as I recall we had a motel rented--Holiday Inn on Dale Avenue--and most of the active workers in the campaign were there.

DR. CRAWFORD: Holiday Inn on what street?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Dale Avenue. Needless to say the spirit of the crowd was very high.

DR. CRAWFORD: What time did you decide that you were going to win?

JUDGE RUSSELL: As I recall, Dr. Crawford, on the trip from Loudon to Knoxville listening to the radio that we realized that the threat of Middle Tennessee would not be enough to overcome the other side of the state and it was apparent that if any of the projections made in that part of the state were anywhere close to being right that he would win. I think it was about that time.

DR. CRAWFORD: They called it pretty early that night?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Yes. It was very early after the polls closed.

DR. CRAWFORD: What did you do to close out the campaign





after that? I know you had to get the office closed and so forth?

JUDGE RUSSELL: I don't really remember anything particularly significant. At that time there were so many people working on a volunteer basis and so forth that I don't remember anything significant about closing down. I remember there it became a question of: Who was going to do what within the administration? Everybody that you could see, knew that if you had anything at all to do with the campaign, wanted to know whether or not you were going to Nashville. Or what was going to happen next? And what was the governor going to do about patronage? And what was the governor going to do about this, that and the other? And who was going to be the chief person in each county and how was all that going to be handled?

DR. CRAWFORD: A lot of questions to answer.

JUDGE RUSSELL: Right. I think that is when it dawned on everybody that hadn't had any real experience in government before--a lot of questions that were being asked that no one had any answers for too.

DR. CRAWFORD: Well it was customary in most counties to appoint a good government committee afterward to handle a lot of the recommendations. Did you do that in Loudon?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Of course, I was not here. I went to Nashville.

DR. CRAWFORD: Uh-huh.



JUDGE RUSSELL: I think I would have to say that in the case of our county, yes it was because in a lot of the cases you know they called me and I saw that it was being expressed.

DR. CRAWFORD: Did you keep getting the calls in Nashville? Where did you go?

JUDGE RUSSELL: As I recall, I left partially my practice of law. Until that time I of course, had strictly volunteered working. I think it was in December that Frank Barnett, Dale and I and some others were working over in some tower building in Nashville and Lamar was (I don't remember exactly what his title was) but I think he was in charge of screening and selecting people for a temporary interim staff and the change over and so forth. But I do know that I worked for Frank Barnett. Dale Young was also in that office. Tom Jackson who had been an Ellington supporter and a Democrat was in that office and several other people.

DR. CRAWFORD: You were working on transition from the Ellington to the Dunn administration?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Yes sir.

DR. CRAWFORD: What kind of cooperation did you get from the Ellington people?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Just absolutely delightful.

DR. CRAWFORD: Well, you needed that for no Republican had been in the office or been elected since 1920. And transition was very important at that time.

JUDGE RUSSELL: Well, I also feel that part of that was



because, again in my opinion and a lot of other people's opinion, that apparently that particular administration had wanted that particular outcome to happen. I think they were behind the Dunn efforts in part.

DR. CRAWFORD: How long did you stay in Nashville?

JUDGE RUSSELL: We were on the transition and then was appointed to Deputy Commissioner in Conservation.

DR. CRAWFORD: Yes, that was in January? Did you go aboard in the beginning?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Yes sir. I don't think I ever came back home until I left after I left the Governor's office. I stayed over at the Department of Conservation as Deputy Commissioner to Bill for about a year and maybe a little more or a little less and at the time among all the other problems of being new that the Governor was having, he was having the problem of not only the pleasantness of being the first Republican governor in "X" number of years, but also of being in the position of trying to fulfill all the dreams of those who had been without an office all those years. Everybody who had identified themselves with the Republicans or who had helped get the administration wanted to be rewarded.

DR. CRAWFORD: That was a problem. More people wanted positions than there were positions available. Was that true here?

JUDGE RUSSELL: It was true everywhere across the state.



I don't really think the governor ever anticipated, and I don't really think he understood that particular problem. I know he was never comfortable with it. He had Joe Hopper on the staff as administrative assistant, and Joe was just tremendous at being able to meet with and talk with people and help keep things soothed down. The problem didn't seem to be getting any better--applications after applications after applications of people wanting jobs, positions and so forth. It was during that period of time that I think Dale Young and myself and Joe, perhaps Frank and maybe even Ralph Griffith, decided that some increased attention was going to have to be given to the problem. That's when I left Conservation and came over to the Governor's staff primarily as I understand it to take some of the pressure off the Governor in terms of having to spend so much time talking to the people about job applications and positions. He didn't have time to . . .

DR. CRAWFORD:                   What date did you go from Deputy Commissioner of Conservation to the staff?

JUDGE RUSSELL:                I don't remember the date exactly. As I say it was a year or a year and a half after I had been there. After I went over there we spent several months attempting to systematize the flow. [There were] so many applications and so many people to talk to. It was to make some attempt to get some handle on it. The Governor was very sensitive about feeling any sense of obligation he had to pick those who helped him but in the same token he had a very deep sense or [was]





very sensitive about being a political type animal in the sense that most people think of that in terms of patronage. I think he sincerely wanted to recognize those people who helped him but at the same time he was not going to allow that push or these demands to let him just start firing people because they were a Democrat or because they had been there in the previous administration. He wanted some reasonableness and some sense about hiring and firing.

DR. CRAWFORD: Yet it wasn't proper because the Republican Party had been out of power so long and people felt they were entitled to something for their support and in order to keep support they wanted something done. It was a problem. What were you able to do with that problem?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Well, we sat down first with Dale, Frank Barnett and Chip Christianson and some extent Ralph Griffith and to a lesser extent Lee. Lee always had that ability to stay away from those kind of issues and remain in a position on thinking about something that he would call a loftier level. Nonetheless regardless how you think about a problem, it was a real problem.

DR. CRAWFORD: Certainly was.

JUDGE RUSSELL: We attempted to set systems to (1) to handle the volume of paper work where papers or applications would come in they would be categorized and classified and some attention given to them. One of the chief complaints was that people were sending in the applications and never



hearing from them. It was bad enough not to get the job, but if you never even heard from your application well that was an additional rub and caused three or four more calls and compounded the problem.

DR. CRAWFORD:                   You arranged that part of them would be answered at least?

JUDGE RUSSELL:                Selectively, we tried to get some system that they would be recognized upon receipt and then devise some plans. I don't remember the exact timing on this but some time or other Jane Hardaway became Commissioner of Personnel and Jane and I and Dale and several others worked very closely on computerizing these things: that the information would be available, that if an application came in and in fact there was a job available in this area, the application [and] job availability would be matched and necessary paper work would be done. And if it could be worked out, the job would be filled. I think we accomplished some of this. I don't think the problem or the Governor was ever comfortable with that part of the administration--ever.

DR. CRAWFORD:                   Well, some governors aren't and some seem to love it. What was the nature of most of the paper you received? Was it applications for jobs?

JUDGE RUSSELL:                At that time?

DR. CRAWFORD:                   Uh-huh.

JUDGE RUSSELL:                Yes sir. Applications and recommenda-



tions. People would apply for a job and they would get thirty or forty people to write them a letter telling them how good they were.

DR. CRAWFORD: That involved a lot of paper, didn't it?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Yes. People would send in pictures of their wives and family carrying banners for the Governor. We worked a lot too during that time with the various commissioners, most of whom were very cooperative and sensitive to the problem. All of them wanting to be able to do the job that they were supposed to do and of course, they were having the problem themselves at each department, but weren't compounded like it was at the Governor's office. Most of them were very cooperative and able to add positive suggestions on how to handle it with few exceptions. I had a particularly unsatisfying and unhappy experience with Commissioner of Education.

DR. CRAWFORD: Stimbert?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Stimbert.

DR. CRAWFORD: He was not there very long.

JUDGE RUSSELL: Thank goodness in my opinion. He was not helpful, supportive or had any insight at all into the particular problems that we were faced with. The Governor was not trying ever to tell Commissioner Stimbert how to run his department in the sense of internally telling him how to do it, but I don't think the Commissioner realized the responsibility that the Governor had to the people and it was most unhappy.

DR. CRAWFORD: Well, I think he had no experience out-



side of working for a school system as an administrator with closely defined responsibilities, where as it was a much larger job up there.

JUDGE RUSSELL: We all shared that to some extent. I perhaps cannot be entirely objective in talking about Commissioner Stimbert because I think he did the Governor and the administration and the state and several others personally a disservice with his attitude in trying to resolve that particular problem.

DR. CRAWFORD: I think that was one of the few public disputes and resignations that were involved in the administration.

JUDGE RUSSELL: Right.

DR. CRAWFORD: When all this paperwork came in, did you try clearing it any way through your county good government committees and the county from which it originated?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Yes sir.

DR. CRAWFORD: And you still had a big volume?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Yes sir. Of course, you can't tell anybody not to send an application in. Of course, when they come in and all of them that came in were not cleared. If there were no jobs available, if there were no positions available or if the person that applied for a job which he was either legally not qualified or rather he's not qualified we didn't spend time making any checks or backgrounds on those. We





tried to remove as much of this as possible from the Governor's office over to the Department of Personnel, not politically but just for the pure application of good personnel procedures for clearing them--not politically clearing them--but just to handle them on an administrative type basis.

DR. CRAWFORD: Took a lot of processing?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Right. Computers were added, programs were designed and I think we made some significant progress in handling them.

DR. CRAWFORD: Do you have any idea what percentage of the applicants were able to get anything?

JUDGE RUSSELL: I do not.

DR. CRAWFORD: I understand it was rather low in part because the Governor was not able to or did not feel that he could make extensive changes.

JUDGE RUSSELL: If you mean that he did not just go out and fire people, that's true. Yes sir.

I think he made commitments to state employees on a moral basis not to do that. Had he not done that, I still think it would have been basically the same because that was the kind of person he was. He would not yield to that kind of pressure.

DR. CRAWFORD: And of course, the fact that he did not lost some popularity with some supporters.

It was a situation where you couldn't win whatever you did.

JUDGE RUSSELL: There's a lot in that.

DR. CRAWFORD: Did you handle any applications for com-

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missions or boards and so forth or just jobs?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Both. In the interim period before he actually went into office of course-- things I spoke of earlier with Lamar and Baine and the Governor himself, screened the commissioner's applications off before the appointments were made. I'll never forget that experience either. Which is certainly to be understood. Once the Governor had decided upon who was going to be the Commissioner of whatever, then all these many applications we had we would divide up. And, of course, the Governor would call the one who was appointed and say, "Congratulations, I've appointed you Commissioner of Whatever". And the rest of us would call the ones who didn't get it and say, "Guess what, you didn't get appointed a thing." (Laughter) Most people were very nice. And I think the Governor was fortunate in having the quality of people that were being recommended or had applied or had made themselves available for service.

DR. CRAWFORD: It was an effective administration, remarkably free of scandal, and the people generally did a good job state wide. You were out of Loudon County so you weren't involved with the Good Government Committee here in the county?

JUDGE RUSSELL: I was not other than when they called me in Nashville.

DR. CRAWFORD: When did you leave the Governor's staff?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Possibly two and a half years after I

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went there.

DR. CRAWFORD: That would have been about '74.

JUDGE RUSSELL: No, '73. Cause I went in '71 and I stayed '71 and '72 and I think it was about in March of '73 or somewhere in there. Somewhere in mid-year.

DR. CRAWFORD: Did you want to get back to Loudon County?

JUDGE RUSSELL: I did.

DR. CRAWFORD: Many people serve in an administration but don't want to stay around indefinitely. Sometimes that is not possible anyway.

JUDGE RUSSELL: Of course, by training and by choice I was an attorney and a lawyer. The job that I was doing was extremely fascinating and it gave me an opportunity, to meet people across the state that otherwise I would not have [met]. I'm convinced then and still am that for personal reasons it was a good association with the administration for me. I got to the point I was not doing anything else new, different or particularly broadening that was either helping me or the administration. The Governor, in my opinion, really never understood-- he may have understood it in the years that I was there-- didn't have a complete grasp on how to utilize staff, staff positions, commissioner cabinet positions. I think he was aware he was not, and I think that [it] bothered him personally. He didn't know what people were supposed to do.

DR. CRAWFORD: Well, the Republicans had been out of office for half a century.



JUDGE RUSSELL: Not only the fact that the Republicans of course, but I think the kind of work experience that the Governor had had before hadn't particularly prepared him for what he faced in that respect. I think Governor Dunn in my opinion, is one of the very select group of people in the world that are truly superior individuals and the rest of us don't fall into that category. He has capabilities and abilities which collectively put him in my opinion in an elite group of people. Even people in that group can't be superior in every respect although he nets out to that.

DR. CRAWFORD: No one knows everything and he certainly had had no experience in that sort of thing at all.

JUDGE RUSSELL: I think if he had known what all that he was going to face in those years I'm not sure he would have. I think he is glad he did it, and I think he made a significant contribution to the quality of leadership that the state needed, but I'm not sure that he would put himself and his family through the heartbreak that you have to go through with what he did.

DR. CRAWFORD: He was lucky having some good people around him. But again, practically all of them were new at the job.

JUDGE RUSSELL: Right.

DR. CRAWFORD: I'm sure the relationships between the division duties, and so forth was always





a problem.

JUDGE RUSSELL: Very ill defined.

DR. CRAWFORD: Did you attend cabinet meetings?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Yes sir. When I was on the staff I did.

Sometimes before that when Commissioner Jenkins was not available I attended in his place.

DR. CRAWFORD: We have gone over very briefly your responsibilities as Deputy Commissioner of Conservation. Generally, what did you do then?

JUDGE RUSSELL: As Deputy Commissioner? I didn't know Bill Jenkins very well when I went over there. During the interim period we got to know each other real well and that was one of the reasons that I went to Conservation. He and I talked about it a long time and talked to the Governor about it and we felt like that we would be able to work well together. Bill agreed to take that job and then as part of that I was to go with him as Deputy Commissioner.

There again, as far as any formal designation of responsibilities Bill and I more or less worked on kind of a joint--my duties were not limited to say to internal administrative affairs of the department nor were they limited to outside matters. Bill [and I were] like partners--him being the senior partner and I was a junior partner. We kind of did most things together. Whatever he was involved in, it was not, you go over here and do this and I'll do this, it was let's do this together now. We faced administrative changes together within the department. We conducted staff

1. Problem.

2. Statement of the problem.

3. Solution.

4. Conclusion.

5. References.

6. Appendix.

7. Bibliography.

8. Index.

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25. Areas.

26. Lengths.

27. Weights.

28. Measures.

29. Units.

30. Symbols.

meetings more or less together.

Bill is an extremely easy person to work with and get along with. He had a down-to-earth, homey approach to all of life including the operation of the department. I think his most effective endeavors in the department were his ability just to relate to people who worked in the department, encouraging them to do their job. He would listen to them, perceive what their problems were and act as a go-between with the cabinet and or the Governor and then down through the department trying to get economic problems solved.

He, of course, had a good relationship with members of the Legislature. I think he was effective in keeping the budget requests up. I think he did a lot of good for the parks and new development going on and I think he encouraged that and was able to see that they were properly funded. So basically whatever the Commissioner did, I did with him.

DR. CRAWFORD: Did you enjoy that work?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Very much.

DR. CRAWFORD: I suspect it had more challenge, at least at first, than the Governor's staff, didn't it?

JUDGE RUSSELL: Well, it was more demanding. I'm not sure the quality of it was any greater. But it was a problem to the Governor and in that sense it was something worth working on.

DR. CRAWFORD: How would you evaluate the Dunn Adminis-



tration among other Tennessee gubernatorial administrations? How do you see it as being different?

JUDGE RUSSELL: As being different?

DR. CRAWFORD: Uh-huh.

JUDGE RUSSELL: Based on my limited readings and study of Tennessee governors--as I indicated to you I did have a major in history which included some studies in Tennessee history--I feel that Governor Dunn's Administration brought either back to or for the first time, a feeling that there was an approach to government that was basically honest and its approach was a sincere attempt to analyze problems and to present solutions based on understood needs of a people rather than using the office for personal or organization gain. I am not suggesting that everybody that has been in the governor's office has been there for personal gain, but I am suggesting at least for the first time there was a group of people in Nashville that the general populace felt was over there working for their interests rather than for the people that were there for themselves.

DR. CRAWFORD: Well, it was definitely a change for the people.

JUDGE RUSSELL: Yes sir. Then a difference too was that it brought some effective change by the mere fact that the administration obviously didn't know what it was doing and I think in some cases that was beneficial because not knowing what you are doing you are somewhat freer to attempt different approaches to the solution to problems. If you don't

1. The first thing I noticed when I stepped out of the plane was the cold air. It was a sharp contrast to the warm air of the plane. I had heard that the weather in the north was cold, but I didn't realize it would be so cold. I was wearing a heavy coat, but it didn't seem to be enough. I was also wearing a hat and gloves, but I still felt the cold. I was a little nervous, but I knew I had to do this. I had to see the world from a different perspective. I had to see the world from the north.

2. The second thing I noticed was the silence. It was a deep, quiet silence. I had heard that the north was quiet, but I didn't realize it would be so quiet. There were no cars, no planes, no people. It was just a vast, empty landscape. I was standing in the middle of a frozen lake. The ice was so thick that I could walk on it. I was looking out at the horizon. It was a flat, white expanse. I was alone in the world.

3. The third thing I noticed was the beauty. It was a beautiful, breathtaking beauty. I had heard that the north was beautiful, but I didn't realize it would be so beautiful. The landscape was so vast and open. The sky was so blue and clear. The water was so calm and still. It was a perfect world. I was in the middle of it. I was looking at the world from a different perspective. I was seeing the world from the north.

4. The fourth thing I noticed was the peace. It was a deep, quiet peace. I had heard that the north was peaceful, but I didn't realize it would be so peaceful. There were no wars, no conflicts, no problems. It was just a peaceful world. I was standing in the middle of it. I was looking at the world from a different perspective. I was seeing the world from the north.

5. The fifth thing I noticed was the joy. It was a deep, quiet joy. I had heard that the north was joyful, but I didn't realize it would be so joyful. I was feeling a sense of freedom. I was feeling a sense of peace. I was feeling a sense of joy. I was in the middle of it. I was looking at the world from a different perspective. I was seeing the world from the north.

know, you can't do something, you go ahead and try it and sometimes you find out you can't.

DR. CRAWFORD:                   And you are not necessarily committed to  
  an older way of doing it just because it  
has been done that way. How do you think the administration could  
possibly have done better?

JUDGE RUSSELL:                I think without thinking of many specific  
  examples first, had the governor himself  
not been such a nice person and had been a little stronger in administrative abilities of his own that he would have saved himself a lot of personal grief and could have gotten on with the program a little quicker than he did. I think a large and inordinate of time was spent grappling with small problems and issues that were taking up time to get to things that I felt like the Governor felt like were more important and he would rather spend time on.

He overreacted to criticism to the extent that he would worry about it too much when a member of the opposition, particularly in the Legislature would make slurring or just even comments in honest difference. I think he would worry too much about that. I think had he been better prepared psychologically and with perhaps experience in large administrative type things it would have helped him tremendously. I am not suggesting that as a fault with malice, I am suggesting that he just wasn't prepared for it.

DR. CRAWFORD:                Well, there were many kinds of experience  
  he had not had--administrative as Maxey  
Jarman had, or legislative as Bill Jenkins had. I am sure he





learned a lot in the process.

JUDGE RUSSELL:                   Yes sir. Any of those two you mentioned, after he was elected Bill Jenkins contributed greatly to helping him in a lot of those areas, particularly legislative. The other one did not.

DR. CRAWFORD:                   Judge Russell, what have we left out that you feel to be important that should be included in an account of the government of Tennessee during this period?

JUDGE RUSSELL:                   Things that I can immediately think of, I think that looking back upon the time that I was there that the governor probably would have approached two or three of the problems that he has faced maybe a little differently now, having benefit of hindsight which he didn't. He was never comfortable with the political approach of Congressman Quillen in the First District. Not being the same kind of man, thank goodness that the Congressman was coming from. And not understanding where, was not fully prepared to effectively combat it ( if that is the proper word).

DR. CRAWFORD:                   Well, that problem started early you know and lasted all the way through.

JUDGE RUSSELL:                   Yes sir. That gave us problems during both the campaign and administration.

Which of course perhaps was focused or brought out in the open more on the medical school in Johnson City. I think the Governor was absolutely sincerely convinced that a school should not, ought



to have been built, being the honest person that he is, he said so. I think he now probably has gained that posture of experience that he could have still said so in a different way and it had been more effective without losing some apparent support in the upper East Tennessee area. There was a Tellico Dam issue in this particular county. There again, I think he would have probably approached it a little differently. I don't think he would change his mind on how he felt about it, but I think he followed the advice of the planning staff and came out with some statements that he sincerely believed in but could have done it in a different way. Of course, the prison issue up in Morristown and it also could have been handled differently. It could have and perhaps should have. You know when a governor thinks he is right, he doesn't spend a whole lot of time worrying about aftereffects of what he said and backs up what he said in front.

DR. CRAWFORD: Uh-huh. Those did give political trouble.  
Highway 11W did also.

JUDGE RUSSELL: Yes sir.

DR. CRAWFORD: How do you think he could have handled  
them better if he had known earlier what  
he gained from experience?

JUDGE RUSSELL: I think in his early years particularly  
he made a lot of statements publicly and  
put his personal endorsement openly which was fine, but I think, if  
he had had it to do over again that he would have attempted to approach the principals involved, and define the problem with them



and done it on a more personal basis with the principals and attempted to come to some solution that would be both satisfactory with his conscience and what he thought was right as well as recognizing the other side to the issue. And to just lambast into them by issuing statements and proclamations against them doesn't solve the problem. I think you can do it maybe without doing that.

DR. CRAWFORD:                   How do you think he could have handled the problem with Congressman Jimmy Quillen differently?

JUDGE RUSSELL:                I think Dale Young said it very well. When you sit down and try to come up with a logical solution to a problem you have to assume that there is a logical person on the other side of the problem. In that case I don't think it is applicable. So I don't have any solution.

DR. CRAWFORD:                   He apparently didn't either. Did you enjoy your experience in state government?

JUDGE RUSSELL:                Most of it. It was kind of like being in the Marine Corps. A lot of the things I've done I'm glad to have done, but I wouldn't want to do it again. (Laughter)

DR. CRAWFORD:                   Judge Russell, is there anything else you can think of for the record that would be good to have?

JUDGE RUSSELL:                Not that I can think of at this time other than just to footnote again that Tennessee

and there is on a more personal level, the  
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is indeed fortunate to be able to have had, perhaps still have available, the caliber of person like Winfield Dunn to serve in the capacity of governor and provided the leadership that he did.

DR. CRAWFORD:                      Thank you very much.

in the course of the investigation, it was found that the

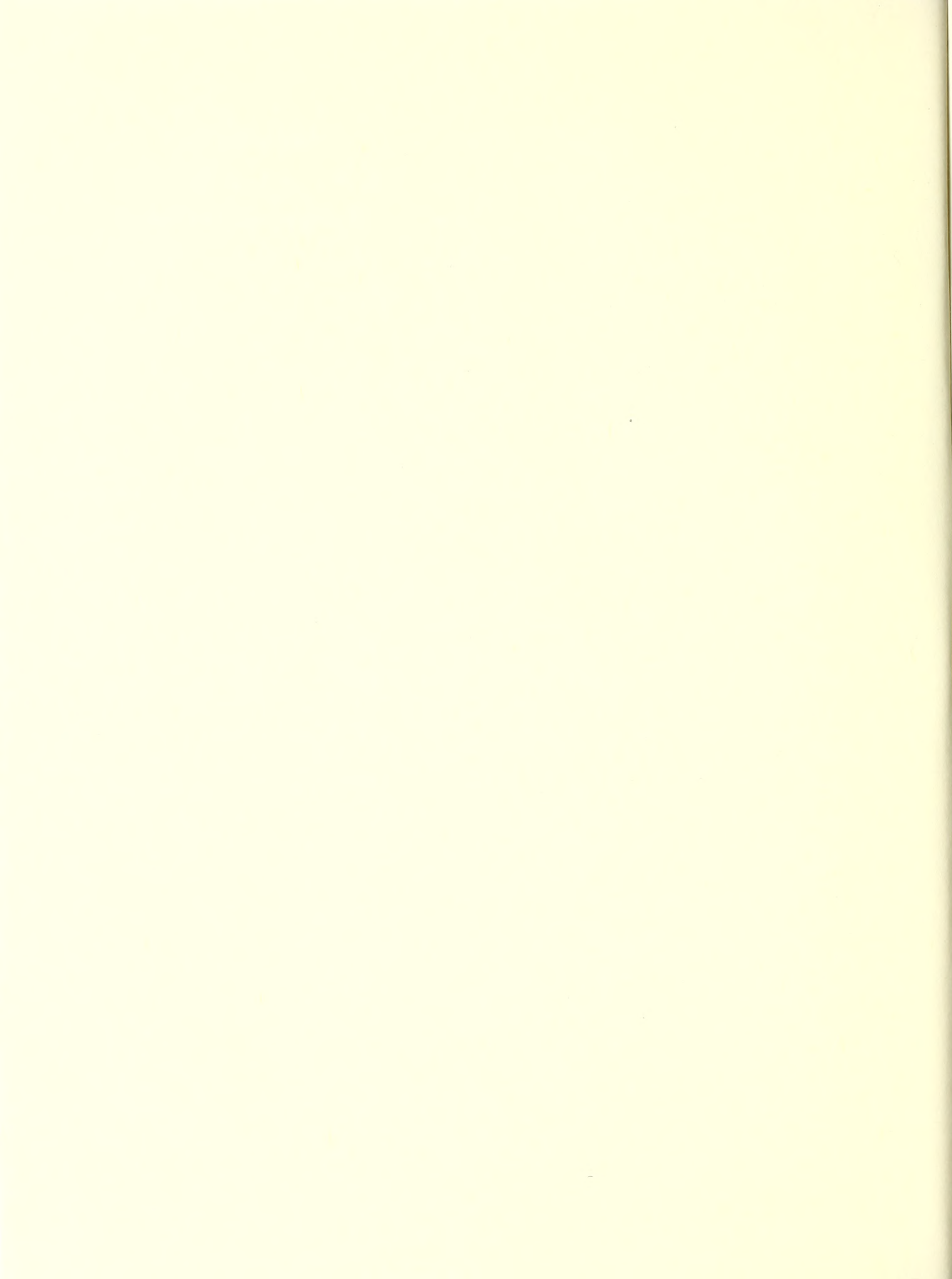
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